Messing with the emotions of the other

Exploring ambiguous youth-adult relations in a residential care

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Abstract

This article provides insights into the lived ambivalence, between support and control that arises in care work. It does so through an analysis of the spatialised entanglements of emotions, age and formal position in intergenerational encounters at a residence for young people suffering from social and mental distress. By identifying the dominant norms associated with the roles of 'resident' and 'professional in the social space of the residence', Warming explores what may, drawing on Haraway, be termed popular, oppositional and inappropriate practices and the emotions and power relations linked to them. The analysis reveals how the three types of practices – all framed by neoliberal youth policies and psy-knowledge about age, (ab)normal personalities and 'professionalism' as spatialised in the institutional organisation of work and the physical space as well as rules, norms, and routines - represent very diverse ways of navigating. Moreover it demonstrates, how 'messing with other people's emotions' and trying to change their behavior is regarded as manipulation if it challenges norms or power relations rooted in spatially anchored perceptions of appropriate practices, but as empowerment if it chimes with norms that correspond to the roles and intersecting binary constructions of childish/young/insane client – adult professional.

Keywords

Youths; care work; power relations; recognition; governance of emotions;

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Exploring affective intergenerational encounters at a residential care institution for young people

This article analyses the spatialised entanglements of emotions, age and formal position in intergenerational encounters at a residence for young people suffering from social and mental distress, located in Denmark. It takes up Kallio's (2007: 125) call to rediscover progressive ideas from feminist thinking to enable analyses that overcome the taken-for-granted nature of intergenerational relations. Thus, generational positioning is approached as an effect of, and a resource for, practices and negotiations of relational identity, power and recognition. Although age plays a role, it does not determine generational positioning. Likewise, and in line with Hubbard (2007) and Davidson & Bondi (2004), emotions are approached both as an embodied force, and as outcomes of the ongoing production of the space in question.

The article provides insights into the lived ambivalence between support and control that arises in care work, a field that is located at the intersection of social policy and intergenerational relations; and explores the derivative effects of this ambivalence on the agency and recognition of young people. Care work "affords geographers a richness of possibilities through which to critically engage with a range of politically charged discourses" (Atkinson et al. 2011: 263). This article makes use of this richness in analysing how institutionally framed intergenerational relationships relate to the wider neoliberal governance of emotions and subjectivities by means of "enclosure and valorisation of certain subjective/emotional dispositions" (D'aoust 2014: 267). Drawing on Haraway's so-called a-modern analytical model, the article analyses the multi-patternedness of the practiced intergenerational relationships, and examines how these practices are guided by – or oppose – spatialised understandings of appropriate practices and relationships, and identifies their effects on the agency and recognition of the young people.

Literature on emotions and intergenerational encounters in social work

In 2007, Vanderbeck pointed out that intergenerational relationships were an under-researched field. Although much work has since been done (e.g. Vanderbeck & Worth eds 2014), the field of youth – adult power relations, and how these intersect with emotions in organisational spaces where social care policies are transformed into lived practices, is still almost unexplored in the geography of children and young people (Blazek 2015), barring a few exceptions. These include Blazek & Hricova (2015), Blazek (2015), Gagen (2015) and Warming (2017), who analyse intergenerational relations and the governance of emotions in child and youth work; Mcintosh et al. (2016) who explore mundane food practices at a residential care institution for children; and Payne (2012) and Wihstutz (2017) who discuss the positioning of young carers.

In social work research, scholars have been preoccupied with the emotional pressures on the adult professionals involved which "often lead[ing] to a depletion of emotional resources" (Biggart et al. 2016, McFadden et al. 2014). Less attention has been paid to the emotional pressures on young people in residential care, or to how the governance of emotions contributes to spatialised agency, recognition and power relations. Hammen's (2016) research on multi-patterned kinship practices between children living in foster care, their foster parents and their parents constitutes a notable exception. Scholars have pointed to the importance of emotional recognition by staff members for the wellbeing and recovery of young people in residential care (Cameron & Maginn 2008, Warming 2015, Lausten & Frederiksen 2016), and to the relationship between legal recognition and feelings of belonging (McIntosh et al. 2016). Kendrick (2013) as well as Lausten & Frederiksen (2016) identify a tension, experienced by professionals, between professionalism and emotional recognition in social work with children and young people; and Pinkney (2013) and Warming (2015 & 2017) point out how managerialism, with its standardization and documentation requirements, challenges emotional and legal recognition.

This article seeks to fill the above-mentioned gaps by illustrating the importance of emotional and legal recognition in social care work with young people, as well as the challenges this poses. It raises questions regarding research that offers advice on how to deal with emotional demands and dilemmas (e.g. Biggart et al. (2016) on emotional intelligence; Ruch (2007) on reflective practice) - notably derivative guidelines that recommend reflective practices based on distinguishing between the so-called three P's (professional, personal and private)[1] - and shows how these practices entangle with managerialism and reinforce spatialised understandings of appropriate practices and relationships.

Combining the a-modern analytical approach with recognition theory

Inspired by Hammen, my search for multi-patterned practices is operationalized through the concepts of popular, oppositional and inappropriate practices (Hammen 2016), and explores the emotions and generational positions associated with these practices. Hammen draws on Haraway's so-called a-modern analytical model, as presented in *Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others* (1992).

The concept *popular practice* addresses practices that are regarded as normal and appropriate in a given context (here the residence), and at first seem quite innocent or benevolent, but which upon closer examination reveal deeper dominance structures. Such practices are based on, and reproduce, taken-for-granted identity constructions and power relations: for instance, the identity position of being a young person suffering from some kind of social and mental distress (and possibly a psychiatric diagnosis) is defined as the opposite of being a morally sane adult. Thus, popular practices are related to space at wider scales ranging from managerialism and the neoliberal governance of subjectivities to the ethos and organisational culture of the place in question. The concept *oppositional practices* addresses practices which counter or question popular practices and the norms that inform them; whereas *inappropriate practices* refers to practices that

[1] TemPra Social Pedagogy (2018)

cannot immediately be reconciled either with the norm or its oppositional practices, but which feature both or none of them, and might also enable alternative approaches (Hammen 2016: 79-80, Haraway 1992).

The analytical model is a-modern in the sense that rather than searching for coherence and uniqueness, it seeks to reveal phenomena as multi-patterned; and rather than identifying causal relations or pointing out good or bad practices, or normal and abnormal personhood, it reveals diversity and hidden conflicts, ambiguities and dilemmas in order to open up for critical reflection and debate. This article contributes to critical reflection and debate by offering a normative platform (which the a-modern approach does not) that draws on Honneth's concept of emotional recognition (Honneth 2003). According to Honneth, emotional recognition is about love and care, and constitutes the basis for people's ability to establish and maintain self-confidence and have the courage to engage socially. Emotional recognition requires an exclusive relationship in the sense that those involved are special to one another and cannot easily be replaced.

The structure of the analysis, and the main body of the paper, follows the a-modern model. Thus, after presenting my data and methodology, including my fieldwork site and the three P's model, which offers guidelines for appropriate practices, I offer an example of popular practices and an analysis of these. I then turn to oppositional practices, and finally to inappropriate practices. I have chosen examples that centre on one of the young people, as this enhances analytical depth and enables the inclusion of a time dimension, which would otherwise not be possible due to limited space. This young person is not representative of all the residents, but her case was selected due to its richness in illustrating the emotional dynamics that are at play for roughly half of the residents.

A residence where autonomy and relational work are prioritised

The analysis is based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out between 2014-15 in Denmark at a residence for young people with various kinds and degrees of social and mental distress, where the young people are offered emotional and practical support but not treatment. The fieldwork was followed up by voluntary

written correspondence with some of the residents in the form of emails, messenger and text messages. During the fieldwork, I combined hanging out in 'public spaces' at the residence with visiting the young people in their rooms and (passive) participation in staff meetings and staff supervision sessions. Likewise, I alternated between a role as passive observer and more active participation, e.g. talking with staff members and residents, and doing things together with them either on my own initiative or theirs. Every resident and staff member was informed about the research project and told that they could ask me to leave at any time or choose to be omitted from my field notes and analyses. Moreover, I was very attentive to non-verbal signs that they were not comfortable in my presence. Some staff members and residents were open and welcoming from the very first day, whereas building up a trusting relationship took more time with others, but sometimes became even deeper. However, building up trust was not a linear process: a single action – for instance engaging in Facebook correspondence with some of the residents – was sometimes enough to threaten my relationships with staff members and cause awkwardness for a while. But after talks between me and them, and among the staff, this was overcome and the trust rebuilt and even strengthened, through mutual, deeper understanding of our different perspectives. The identity of all participants has been anonymised, and the data and data management have been reported to, and approved, by the Danish Data Protection Agency.

At the time of my fieldwork, 20 young people lived at the residence, the majority aged between 15 and 23. In addition, three young people lived in so-called 'halfway apartments' with supervision by staff members. On the residence webpage, the residence is described as "an option for young people who need temporary housing support, rehabilitation and care for up to five years, in the process of moving towards self-reliance and moving into their own homes, communities or similar". The latter reflects a key generational distinction in national social policies, where the focus regarding young people is on development, which involves more resources and heavier requirements for documentable progression towards self-reliance than is the case for older adults with similar difficulties. This policy is spatialised at the residence through a special unit, the "Rose Floor", for the youngest residents. The Rose Floor has more staff hours allocated to it, and is characterized by a family–like organisation, whereas the rest of the residence is organised more like a dorm

where the residents are offered supervision and care – although this is not imposed on them. The intention is to avoid 'institutionalising' the young people, regardless of age, but in practiced they are differentiated according to age. This aim is also reflected in the residence's homely decor, an informal atmosphere between staff and residents, a low degree of control, and a high degree of autonomy and responsibility among the young people.

The staff are organised in small, three-person teams assigned to each of the young people, one of whom acts as coordinator. The director describes the pedagogical approach of the residence as based on *relational* work with an emphasis on trust and recognition. She emphasizes that they are very attentive to the quality of personal relationships in the sense of empathy and emotional warmth; however, they are also aware of the emotional stress that such relational work can produce among staff members. They endeavour to alleviate this through external supervision by a psychologist, and guidelines and clear rules - the so-called 'three P's' - for how to distinguish between the professional, personal and private spheres.

The residence was chosen for the fieldwork after being identified by former staff members as a case of 'best practice' in regard to relational work characterized by recognition and trust. This was later confirmed by the young people, who described the residence as the best place they had ever lived. Thus, the residence may be regarded as what Flyvbjerg (2006) terms an exemplary and critical case for exploring dilemmas, challenges and possibilities in care work

The three P's as a strategy to manage emotional needs and stress

The three P's model is not only essential in the organisational and discursive framing of the intergenerational encounters at this residence, but is also very widespread in Denmark. Combined with responsibilisation and emphasis on (development towards) self-reliance (Lavaud 2017), it constitutes a key axis in the neoliberal governance of emotions and subjectivities, affecting the young clients as well as staff, though only targeting the latter. It is based on the assumption that "building trusting and authentic relationships with young people

is very important in social pedagogy"; however it also emphasizes the need to avoid revealing the private self. Thus, it is argued that engaging the personal and professional dimensions, while avoiding private matters, is crucial in achieving a positive impact in social pedagogical work (TemPra Social Pedagogy). The latter is purported to be necessary for limiting emotional stress on staff and avoiding burn-out, partly because some young people have such 'hungry hearts' that they can't get enough attention. Moreover, it is argued that emotions can lead to 'unprofessional' responses towards the children and young people that are not helpful for their development, and that getting too deeply involved might make them emotionally dependent on staff members. This is regarded as inappropriate, as the child or young person will leave the institution someday, and must get used to changing staff due to rotating working hours and staff replacements (ibid.). Still, it is acknowledged that the distinction that the three P's makes between the personal and the private is hard to define clearly, as it may depend on the personality of the social worker in question, as well as on the concrete social space where the social work practice takes place, in the form of rules, norms and negotiations about appropriate practices (ibid.).

In the following, we will see how this model intersects with the neoliberal governance of subjectivities towards (development of) self-reliance in the spatial shaping of what are regarded as 'appropriate' practices at the residence, thereby also influencing intergenerational encounters with regard to power and recognition.

Popular practices

Anna is one of the older residents, and has lived at the residence for several years. She characterises herself as having an overly "hungry heart", by which she means that she longs for love and care, and can't get enough – she explains that this is due to neglect throughout her childhood. In her everyday life, she struggles to gain emotional recognition, while at the same time she is afraid of being "too much" and of "wearing out her significant others". She explains that her hungry heart had been the cause of emotional stress in a social worker who had enabled Anna to experience emotional recognition for the first time in her life at the age of 18, with the result that the social worker withdrew from contact with her. After that, Anna moved to the

residence. Here, the staff declared that they would "act more professionally" than the social worker who had withdrawn, and not let her hungry heart stress them out. They explained that this would involve teaching her self-governing strategies, and defining clear limits for her contact with staff, in accordance with the 'three P's'. First, she was only allowed to contact them during their working hours. Second, she had to accept that they had limited time for her during working hours; and third that staff and team members could change – and that the staff member who was assigned to her on any given day depended on the situation at the residence as a whole, including the needs of the other residents. These rules were not only applied to Anna but within the entire organisational space. They were reflected in the fact that there were several staff cell phones, and following the daily staff meeting the young people were told which phone they could call. However, to counter the experience of being institutionalised, the staff members were usually flexible and also responded to calls from residents who were not their responsibility that day - but it was their choice whether they did so or not. And, if a young person was experienced as irritating, "too much" or gained a reputation for insisting on contact with his or her favorites, the rules were applied more strictly.

Below, I describe a situation where the staff at the planning meeting had decided that Ingrid would be Anna's contact for the day. Ingrid had previously been a member of Anna's team, but Anna had never really felt comfortable with her. At the staff meeting, the team discusses its work tasks, including which staff members will take care of which young people. It becomes clear that John – who is one of her favorite staff members - will be very busy that day. So Ingrid volunteers to be her contact for the day instead. John comments that Anna will be disappointed, if he postpones their coffee appointment. Peter remarks that Anna is too dependent on personal relationships with staff members, that she already receives a lot of attention, and that she manipulates them to get more attention than she should, at the others' expense: "She is a real border-liner". The staff decide that Ingrid will be Anna's contact that day. Ingrid sends Anna a text message to inform her, and John sends another to postpone their coffee appointment. When Anna reads the messages, her initial reaction is desperation, frustration and disappointment. She tells me that she can't imagine how she will get through the rest of the day and evening, and that she feels jealous of the 'Rose Floor' residents, who are always prioritised: "I feel like they (the staff) think that their (the youngest residents) needs are more

legitimate and important, just because they are younger". Still, she accepts the situation, texting John to make a new coffee appointment the following day, and to ask if he will be in the basement for a get-together that evening. He confirms both appointments, which helps a bit, but she is still very frustrated and anxious about how to get through the day, and she feels a gnawing jealousy.

Analysis

In the above example, all the staff members comply with the norm for appropriate behavior, which is embedded in institutional generational power relations through entanglements of age, the client role, the categorisation of a resident as 'borderline', the three P's, restricted resources, and the requirement stemming from youth policies that residents should become self-reliant - and so does Anna. As Kallio (2007: 134) points out, critique of policy delivery that is embedded in the naturalisation of certain power relations can be difficult to read from young people's explicit acts, but can be exposed through their intuitive acts. This is certainly the case here, where Anna behaves in exemplary fashion, as she not only accepts the decision and signals her trust in the competences and good will of the staff, but also finds a way to make everything more bearable by asking John for another coffee appointment, and inquiring whether he will be in the basement for the evening get-together. The latter is a key component in the appropriate enactment of the role of 'young resident', since joining the get-together is regarded as a step in the right direction towards independence and more ~~s~~sustainable social relationships with non-professionals. Thus, Anna enacts the role of an appropriate resident: First because she respects the staff's decisions and by extension the established power relations between the young people and the adult staff; second because she manages her emotions in a way that does not put pressure either on the staff members or on the other residents,[2] and she also expresses trust in the staff's competences and good will; and third because she displays self-care and developmental readiness. However, when she tells me about her emotions, she explains that she does not really feel that she is capable

[2] In another publication (Warming 2017), I describe how acting up - crying and screaming - affects the emotional atmosphere in the whole house, causing some young people to isolate themselves in their rooms, while others self-harm, some call the staff and want more attention, and still others leave the house (even though they don't really have anywhere to go) to escape the heavy atmosphere

of this: rather, she feels desperate, jealous and sad, but she can't see any alternative course of action, as she also fears being 'too much'. I regard these as emotional expressions of her political awareness of discrimination, injustice and neglect. She is aware that due to scarce resources and adult-professional power to define the situation, including the very definition of her needs, she is denied the emotional recognition that she longs for and which from her perspective is the greatest benefit of living at the residence. However, these longings are 'silenced' and can only be expressed through emotions.

Oppositional practices

Later that same day, Anna clashes with one of the other residents, which makes her feel very bad – so bad in fact that she feels the urge to self-harm. Instead of calling for supervision by the staff as she normally would, she crawls into a fetal position on the floor in her room and starts crying. Anna's room is on the floor directly above the staff office. As it is an old house, her crying is also audible there. Ingrid, who is in the office, exclaims (sounding frustrated): "Oh no…now she's just lying there crying instead of asking for help." Ingrid texts Anna, who doesn't respond. So, Ingrid goes up to Anna's room, and knocks on the door, but Anna doesn't open it. After a couple of attempts to make contact, she gives up. Later on, another staff member, Palle goes to her room. This time she opens the door. He comforts her and explains, why John had had to postpone their appointment. Anna says that she feels neglected and frustrated. Palle replies: "We're not neglecting you. You had a chance to contact Ingrid. Why don't you give her a chance – think what it must be like for Ingrid, when every time she offers to help you, you reject her". Sometime later, Anna writes to me about this episode on Facebook: "I do empathise with Ingrid, but I can't help rejecting her, because she just makes me feel even worse", and "he made me feel so borderline". An hour later, another staff member, Sofie goes to Anna's room to 'check up on her' and finds her cutting her inner thigh with a razor blade. They have a talk, which makes Anna feel better, and Sofie persuades her to help prepare food in the kitchen, so that she won't be alone and at risk of self-harming. After dinner, Anna goes to the basement for the evening get-together, so she won't be alone, and in the hope of seeing John. However, John is not the first staff member to arrive - Peter is. He promptly empties an envelope with the razor blades and bloody napkins, which he has

found in Anna's room, onto the table right in front of her. He says: "It's simply not okay that you don't clean up after yourself, when you've been showing off!" Anna runs out of the room. Later that evening, she admits herself to the closed psychiatric unit at the hospital. The following day, she is back at the residence and talks to Sofie about what happened, explaining how humiliated and intimidated she felt, when Peter emptied the envelope in front of the other young people. Sofie answers that she understands Anna's feelings, and that in her view Peter had reacted unprofessionally. At the residence, this is a very harsh criticism, which basically means 'unacceptable'.

Analysis

In the above episode, Anna's enactment of her political awareness reaches another level, moving from 'just' emotional expression to oppositional behaviour, which begins when she fails to call for supervision and instead shuts herself in her room crying, and continues to spurn Ingrid's care. Anna tells me later: "I do understand that it might be emotionally hurtful for her – but she has to be professional; it's not my problem – it's hers, and she has to deal with that with her supervisor". Here, Anna invokes the three P's in countering the adults' power to define the situation, and gives a different twist to the polarised generational positioning: the adult staff have to abide by the three P's, and not allow their private feelings to influence them, while at the same time they are duty bound to deal with the young residents' emotions. Thus, she does not take responsibility for co-producing Ingrid's emotions, as Palle implies that she should, and she also rejects the rule that she should accept assistance from all the staff members.

Peter also engages in oppositional behavior, as Sofie's comment about his unprofessional behavior reveals. Anna feels that he is encroaching on her privacy and is offended, when he brings something that, to her, is very private and intimate (namely material evidence of her self-harming and feelings of desperation) into the public sphere in the basement common room. However, while Peter's concrete action would be interpreted by most staff members as unacceptable, the act of bringing something that is private and intimate to the young resident in question, for instance love affairs or bodily hygiene, into the public sphere is common

practice. The implicit rule in this case is that the young people are supposed to talk to the staff and take advice from them about their private matters, including conflicts with one other, but not to talk too much among themselves about such matters. An example of a violation of this rule occurred when two other young residents texted each other extensively during a period in which one of them was admitted to the closed psychiatric unit at the hospital. They were both told that they should "leave it to the adults" (staff members) to take care of the resident at the hospital. One of them responded: "I *am* an adult, I'm over 18", which caused laughter all around. The use of the word 'adults' instead of 'staff' indicates how the naturalised child – adult (power) relationship is assumed to be equivalent to the resident-staff relationship. However this unspoken rule is countered with humour by one of the youngsters, which helps to smooth over the resistance to power relations (Gitterman 2003). This, and many other examples, show how being a resident means being positioned like a young child rather than an almost (or young) adult in the taken-for-granted generational power relationship. However, the young people do display some resistance to this positioning. They reject the notion that being young (and mentally vulnerable) is equivalent to being a child, and do not accept that just because they are young and welfare clients they have to allow such encroachments on their privacy. Their opposition is fully in line with the formulated ethos of the residence; however in practice this ethos is challenged by construction of the young people as vulnerable and childish, and a naturalised intergenerational relationship which legitimises the regulation of their private relationships and compromises their privacy in other ways too.

Inappropriate practices

I now turn to inappropriate practices, which, as mentioned above, produce tensions, that cannot immediately be categorised either as norms or as oppositional practices, but which involve both. Let me start once again with a daily staff meeting. On the day in question, several staff members are absent due to illness. The management has therefore called in temporary staff. The staff agree that John will take care of the 'Rose Floor', as Lotte (the only other permanent staff member present) has to visit the residents in the halfway apartments. Anna is waiting outside the meeting room to hear the outcome of the planning meeting. Again,

she becomes very frustrated, and asks: “Why is it always me, who has to settle for the temporary staff? Tine says: “Yes, I know, it’s frustrating – but the management has decided that we can’t allocate temporary staff to the “Rose floor” – I hope you can put up with me, just for today. Anna replies: “Sorry, Tine – it’s nothing personal. I just don’t know you as well as John and Lotte, and I really miss the safe feeling of being with John – it’s been so many days since he’s been here”. Tine nods and answers: “I’m sure it’ll be okay with John if you text him to make an appointment for Thursday, or to call him soon.” John turns up and confirms what Tine has just said. He adds: “And you’re welcome on the Rose Floor for a cup of coffee, I just have to prioritise being there for them, but often they don’t need me”. Anna seems mollified and says: “I’d really like that”. But the coffee appointment never takes place, as the day at the Rose Floor unfolds quite chaotically. Instead, John offers to visit her room just before going home: “We have a staff meeting at four o’clock, and after that I’m free and can drop by your room to say goodbye.” He does so, and they have a half-hour chat.

Analysis

Whereas in the former examples Anna is positioned as the one who acts and feels inappropriately and therefore has to work on herself, John’s and Tine’s behavior mediates the way policies are enacted in practice quite differently. Tine passes on the decision from the staff meeting to Anna, neither defending it as the right decision, nor challenging it as problematic. She just says that this is how management prioritises, and she hopes that Anna can put up with her (Tine) being her contact person that day. Thus, she shows that she realizes that this is not good enough from Anna’s perspective, and she discloses the (otherwise euphemised) power relationship at play. She refrains from labelling Anna’s struggle for emotional recognition as pathological; rather she accepts that being with John is special to Anna. Unlike previously, Anna neither downplays nor vents her frustrations, but instead seems to feel differently as a result of her exchange with Tine. She is still frustrated, but not as afraid of being ‘too much’ or feeling ‘so borderline’. Thus, on the one hand, Anna insists on her need for emotional recognition (in the form of attention from John), but on the other hand she subverts the one-way care relationship between staff members and residents

by displaying concern for Tine. Tine insists that Anna must accept that she will be her contact person for the day, but at the same time opens up the possibility for some contact with John, despite his allocation to the Rose Floor. John backs this up by inviting Anna for coffee on the Rose Floor. In doing so, he implicitly admits that Anna might need more contact with him than the youngest residents on the Rose Floor. However, he also emphasises that those residents are his primary responsibility that day, which is why he cancels the coffee appointment. To make up for it, he performs another inappropriate practice: namely staying at work a bit longer than he should. He respects the boundaries between the professional and private spheres, as he doesn't invite Anna home, doesn't allow her to call him on his private phone, and doesn't communicate with her on Facebook – but he spends half an hour of his private leisure time with her. This may well be what saves the day for Anna and prevents her from cutting herself or being admitted to the closed psychiatric unit at the hospital, as occurred previously. That, at least, is how Anna herself describes what it means to her.

When it comes to popular and oppositional practices, care and control are often two sides of the same coin, since both rely on and reproduce the taken-for-granted intergenerational relationship in which competent, care-giving adults and less competent, care-receiving young people intersect with categories like pathological and dangerous 'hungry hearts'. However, this is not the case above. Here, Tine and Anna care for each other, without attempting to control each other. Moreover, the power relationship in which staff members have the power to define the legitimate needs of the young people is no longer euphemised and no longer seems to apply. Instead, power is deposited with the management in the form of top-down policies, which the staff and young people have to navigate in the best possible way. Rather than labelling Anna as childish, abnormal and posing a threat to their integrity, the staff deploy a difference-centred equality ethos, acknowledging Anna's wish for time with John without passing judgement. This enables emotional recognition, and results in less condemnation of the young people's emotions and agency than in the case of the popular practices.

Concluding discussion: Messing with other people's emotions

In this article, I have used social work as a case through which to explore the emotional dynamics and power relations that arise in intergenerational encounters. I took up Kallio's (2007: 125) call to rediscover progressive ideas from feminist thinking to enable analyses that overcome the taken-for-granted nature of intergenerational relations, and I demonstrated how age does not determine which generational positioning a person is ascribed and identifies with, e.g. whether a person aged 18 belongs to the young or old end of the generational scale. Thus, in line with Gagen (2015), Ahmed (2014) and Kraftl and Blazek (2015), I regard lived intergenerational relations as constructed through affective encounters, and I offer insight into how, in social work with young people, these encounters result from entanglements between age and resident/staff positions, spatialised youth policies emphasising self-reliance, and the governance of emotions. Moreover, I found that residents also cared and took responsibility for each other and for staff members, thereby opposing the taken-for-granted nature of intra- and intergenerational relations. This resonates with geographers' (e.g. Evans & Becker 2009 & Payne 2012) deconstructions of dichotomies that position young people as care receivers and adults as caregivers. However, these deconstructions focus on child-parent relationships, whereas I point out how these dynamics also occur in residential care featuring institutional, spatialised intergenerational relationships. Moreover, the analysis sheds light on how intra-generational care, in particular, was met with corrections and concern by the staff: i.e. it is not only misrecognised (as pointed out by Wihstutz 2017), but also countered and problematised.

Inspired by Honneth's call to analyze the social and discursive framing of the unequal distribution of recognition, I show how emotional recognition becomes the object of daily struggles in intergenerational encounters. I reveal how such struggles result from entanglements between the governance of emotions (through the three P's model), and spatialised youth policies in which younger residents were privileged over older residents through the organisational space of the Rose Floor with its extra staff hours and privileged access to permanent staff. Thus, my analysis shows how recognition theory can be helpful in identifying and analysing subtle power relations and not merely dichotomous ones. It thus also disaffirms McNay's criticism that recognition theory fails to connect subject formation with sociological analyses of power (McNay 2008).

I applied a so-called a-modern analysis to reveal the dominant structures of the social space through the lens of popular practices, to uncover resistance through a focus on oppositional practices, and finally to highlight alternatives to conformity or resistance by exploring inappropriate practices. All three types of practice are obviously framed by neoliberal youth policies and psy-knowledge about age, (ab)normal personalities and 'professionalism' as spatialised in the institutional organisation of work and the physical space as well as rules, norms, and routines; however these three types of practice represent very diverse ways of navigating. Thus, this analytical model enabled me to reveal the messy and ambiguous nature of the young people's and social workers' agency, which both conformed to and challenged taken-for-granted intergenerational power relations and the governance of emotions. In line with Brown and Thomas (2014: 4-6), I discovered intergenerational power relations in which adult professionals were positioned as possessing the power of definition, a power that was "substantial and effective in conditioning the social language, practice, and desires of everyday life" for the young people. However, I also pointed out how the young people sometimes drew on the same knowledge (and language) in challenging those power relations and refusing emotional governance. I also identified (inappropriate) practices, both by residents and staff members, which eluded this power of definition. The analysis therefore contributes to understanding how "the interpersonal relationships and dynamics between service providers and their clients are not just contingencies but the ultimate mediums of policy delivery" (Smith et al 2016: 961). Likewise it enabled me to illustrate young people's intuitive "political awareness" (e.g. Kallio 2007), and to show that such intuitive political awareness can also be found among staff, and I thereby also contribute to research in this field. Thus, although both groups sang the praises of the residence, the young people's emotional expressions in relation to the popular practices, as well as the oppositional and inappropriate acts performed by them and the staff, showed an intuitive political awareness of – and resistance to – dominance, injustice, and the neglect of the young people's emotional recognition.

The 'three P's' model, combined with the broad neoliberal policy focus on young people's development towards self-reliance, appeared to render some requests for emotional recognition illegitimate, consigning them to more private spaces. However the residence *is* the resident's home. This relates to the problem,

pointed out by Mcintosh et al. (2016: 42), that residents and staff experience such places as institutions rather than homes, due to the stricter rules and time schedules that operate there compared to at home. However, my analysis shows how the governance of emotions contributes to that sensation by precluding emotional recognition. The three P's model recommends that social work professionals should keep their private lives off limits to protect themselves, including when it comes to information sharing. Conversely, if the residents are to enact their role appropriately they should not conceal their private lives, as private and intimate information, including emotions, are seen as being at the heart of the social work professionals' supervision and guardianship. Thus, for both parties, the residence becomes a place for working on the pathological or un-developed subjectivities of the young people, rather than a home.

In the research literature, the ambiguous nature of social work as characterised both by support and control is an ongoing discussion which has been revived and updated in today's climate of responsibilisation and the neoliberal governance of subjects (Warming & Fahnøe 2017). I offer insights into intervening dynamics, notably the governance of emotions and intergenerational power relations. In line with Kendrick (2013) and Lausten and Frederiksen (2016), I show how these ambiguities come to the fore in intergenerational relationships, and are reinforced by the governance of emotions. Thus, rather than merely contributing to the knowledge base about such governance, as for example McFadden et al. (2014) do in their work on staff's emotional stress, and Jimenez (2013) does in research on pathological, manipulating subjects, I reveal, how this knowledge base itself contributes to imposing emotional governance both on residents and staff members in ways that further polarize the dichotomous intergenerational relationship and stymie the agency and emotional recognition of the residents. Thus, in the case analysed here, such knowledge was part of the interaction between Anna and the staff members: in Anna's fear of 'being too much', and in the staff's fear of being emotionally manipulated, unable to act appropriately and at risk of burning out. The knowledge in question gives rise to a power relationship in which the social workers have a license – i.e. the right and duty – to modify or even manipulate the residents' emotions. However, if the social workers are emotionally influenced by the young people, this is seen as a sign of unprofessionalism or of the young residents' pathological manipulative tendencies. When clients mess with other people's feelings it is seen as a symptom

of their abnormality and of the danger they pose to social workers and others, whereas when the social workers do this it is regarded as necessary to support the residents' development towards self-reliance. However, the analysis showed that things are a lot messier than that. For instance, social workers also attempt to manipulate the young people's emotions, and their actions can also be emotionally motivated and possibly even harmful to the young person in question. Neither, is it easy, for the residents or the staff, to manage their own emotions effectively - or even to mess with others' emotions in rational and strategic ways. Moreover, the three P's organisational ethos, that was supposed to help manage the heavy emotional demands on staff at residences for young people (Biggart et al. 2016, McFadden et al. 2014), also produced negative emotions that resulted in suffering, self-harming and admission of some young residents to the closed psychiatric unit at the hospital, and acts of resistance both by staff and residents. Thus, although the three P's model may help professionals to manage emotional stress, it was also a cause of stress in itself, and it hindered emotional recognition of the young people. The examples of inappropriate practices described above offer alternative ways to understand - and handle - the residents' hungry hearts and the social workers' emotional stress. Moreover, some residents' 'hungry hearts' were not categorised along the spectrum of normality versus abnormality, or labelled as dangerous, but were simply regarded as a need, which staff and residents had to figure out how to satisfy together, within the framework of the organisational space in question. Thus, inappropriate practices seemed to enable more emotional recognition and result in less condemnation of the young people's emotions and behavior than was the case in regard to popular practices guided by knowledge on pathological/normal subjectivity, the three P's governance of emotions and youth policies on self-reliance.

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